

SUPRA-BADGE:	Planning & Analysis
SUB-BADGE:	Gap Analysis
CHALLENGE:	Conducting a gap analysis.
ARTIFACT:	Design Document 1 developed for EDCI 572: Learning Systems Design (Fall 2025).
CRITERIA:	Criteria for successful completion of this challenge: This challenge focuses on conducting a gap analysis to describe the nature of a learning or performance problem and propose a potential instructional and/or non-instructional solutions and strategies. Gap analysis is a process of determining the gap between actual situation and desired situation as well as the root causes of this gap. Reflection must address: How did you determine or identify the learning or performance problem, including data sources you used? How did your artifact demonstrate your competence in each of the performance statements? <i>Examples:</i> Performance Assessment and Design and Develop HPT Solutions and Evaluation Plan (EDCI 528), Design Document 1 (EDCI 572), Project Plan (EDCI 569 if taken in Spring 2021 or later), demonstration of understanding why the issue occurs (design, performance, workplace, educational, other).

Reflection

I. Competency and Artifact Identification

The competency for this challenge is conducting a gap analysis as part of the **Planning and Analysis** supra-badge. The artifact I selected is **Design Document 1** created for **EDCI 572: Learning Systems Design**. The project focused on designing a workshop for communication partners of adults learning to use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. The design process began with a systematic gap analysis to identify the difference between the current performance of communication partners and the desired level of knowledge, confidence, and involvement needed to effectively support AAC users. This artifact demonstrates my ability to identify a learning problem, analyze its underlying causes, and use those findings to guide instructional design decisions.

II. Description of How the Artifact Supports the Competency

The gap analysis served as the foundation for the entire design document. To identify the performance problem, I drew upon my professional experience as a speech-language pathologist working with adults who use AAC, observations of communication partners during therapy sessions, and common challenges reported throughout the AAC service delivery process. These sources consistently revealed that although communication partners wanted to help, many lacked the knowledge, resources, and confidence needed to support successful AAC use after the device was delivered. In the design document, I compared the desired performance with the actual performance and identified the instructional need for a workshop that addressed misconceptions, increased communication partner involvement, and provided practical strategies for supporting AAC users. The findings from the gap analysis directly informed the instructional goal and established a clear rationale for the proposed instructional solution rather than designing instruction based on assumptions alone.

III. Competency Alignment with Prior Knowledge and Experience

My clinical experience working with adults with acquired communication disorders provided valuable insight during this analysis. Throughout my career, I have observed that successful AAC outcomes depend not only on the individual using the device but also on the knowledge and engagement of family members and caregivers. I frequently encountered situations where communication partners were motivated to help but had received little guidance on how to participate in the communication process once the device was issued. Those professional observations helped me recognize that the primary problem was not a lack of technology, but a gap in communication partner knowledge and support. Applying the formal gap analysis process taught me how to organize these observations systematically, distinguish the current and desired performance states, and justify instructional recommendations using evidence rather than personal experience alone.

IV. Reflection on Experiences

Completing this artifact strengthened my understanding that effective instructional design begins with accurately defining the problem before developing solutions. Rather than immediately creating instructional content, I learned to first examine the existing situation, identify the underlying causes of the performance gap, and determine whether instruction was an appropriate intervention. This process reinforced the importance of using evidence to guide instructional decisions and helped me appreciate how a well-conducted gap analysis provides a strong foundation for the remainder of the design process. **In future instructional design projects, I plan to strengthen this competency by incorporating additional data collection methods, such as learner interviews, surveys, and observations, to better distinguish instructional problems from non-instructional performance issues. I also intend to seek feedback from subject matter experts and stakeholders earlier in the analysis process to refine my gap analyses and ensure that future instructional solutions are grounded in multiple sources of evidence.**